

VZCZCXYZ0000
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHIL #2773/01 3220913
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 180913Z NOV 09
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6017
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 0341
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO IMMEDIATE 5998
RHEHAAA/THE WHITE HOUSE WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL//CCPA// IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1785
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 8049
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 2046
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI

UNCLAS ISLAMABAD 002773

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [OIIP](#) [OPRC](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PK](#)

SUBJECT: PAKISTAN MEDIA REACTION: TOP STORIES, TERRORISM/MILITARY,
MISCELLANEOUS, POLITICAL ISSUES, ECON/BUSINESS - NOVEMBER 18, 2009

Summary: President Obama's remarks that the U.S. wants China to help improve relations between India and Pakistan received extensive coverage in media on Wednesday. Urdu newspapers "Jang," and "Express" published U.S. Embassy denial regarding the presence of alleged "Blackwater operatives" in a neighborhood of Islamabad as reported in a section of media. All newspapers highlighted the Transparency International report that corruption in Pakistan has increased in one year of PPP government. Reports that security forces captured most of Taliban's bases in South Waziristan Agency were also prominent displayed. All major dailies, quoting BBC, reported that the Swat Taliban leader Fazlullah managed to escape to Afghanistan. End Summary.

TOP STORIES

News Story: U.S. Requests China To Help Develop Indo-Pak Ties "Dawn" (11/18)

"The United States wants China to help improve relations between India and Pakistan and to work with it to ensure that neither Pakistan nor Afghanistan is used as a base for terrorism, says U.S. President Barack Obama. Mr. Obama emphasized both points in his remarks in Beijing on Tuesday and they were also included in a joint statement issued after talks between the U.S. president and his Chinese counterpart Hu Jintao." (Story also covered in all newspapers)

News Story: U.S. Denies Presence of Blackwater Operatives in Islamabad 'Jang,' 'Express' (11/18)

"The U.S. Embassy has clarified that a national daily newspaper yesterday published on its front page the photograph of a residence in Islamabad that it alleged is a 'suspected Blackwater house,' where 'suspicious foreigners' had 'manhandled' and created 'a wave of fear and insecurity' among residents. The paper's edition today adds further to the story, but claiming that its photographer had been harassed by police while taking pictures of the residence. The accusations are entirely false."

News Story: Corruption In Pakistan Increases: Transparency International "Daily Times" (11/18)

"Pakistan has climbed five places to number 42 in an annual list of the world's most corrupt countries, Transparency International said in a report on Tuesday. In its annual Corruption Perceptions Index, the TI said Pakistan's 2009 Corruption Perceptions Index Score is 2.4, and of the 180 countries and in its ranking as the most corrupt country, it has slipped five ranks, from 47 in 2008 to the 42nd most

corrupt country in 2009." (Story also covered in all newspapers)

TERRORISM/MILITARY ISSUES

News Story: Troops To Hunt Militants In Forests; ISPR Says Main Taliban Bases In SWA Cleared "The News" (11/18)

"The security forces have captured most main Taliban bases in their offensive in South Waziristan Agency and will soon fan out into the rugged countryside to hunt for militants there, commanders said on Tuesday. Chief military spokesman and D.G. ISPR Maj. Gen. Athar Abbas told reporters on a trip to South Waziristan with the army that some militants might have slipped out the region but many were hiding."

News Story: Laddah, Sararogha Cleared; Street Fighting In Makin "Dawn" (11/18)

"The mud-compound, which had a part of its outer wall blown up by artillery fire, was used as an Al Qaeda training facility until recently. Jihadi literature and guerilla training manuals, mostly in Arabic, lay in a heap amidst a huge pile of weapons left by the insurgents after security forces captured Laddah, a key militant stronghold in South Waziristan. Army officials said on Tuesday that the place was used for militant as well as ideological training."

News Story: Fazlullah Escapes To Afghanistan "Dawn" (11/18)

"Maulana Fazlullah, one of the most wanted Taliban leaders, has told the BBC that he has escaped to Afghanistan and is planning new attacks on Pakistani forces. Fazlullah was said by officials to have been wounded or killed in July, during the operation in Swat."

(Story also covered in all newspapers)

News Story: Militants' Possession Of Israeli Arms Raises Questions "The Nation" (11/18)

"Use of Israeli-made light arms by militants against security forces in Waziristan has raised several questions amongst many recently. 'The Nation' has learnt on good authority that militants are using Israeli-made light arms including 'Uzi gun' and 'Rapid-fire pistol' against security forces in North Waziristan as the operation Rah-I-Rast reached its final stage."

News Story: 24 Militants Surrender In Bajaur "The News" (11/26)

"Twenty-four militants surrendered to security forces while a huge quantity of weapons was seized during a search operation in Charmang area of Bajaur's Nawagai Tehsil on Tuesday. The militants, belonging to Shaida Shah, Asghar and Manogi areas in Charmang valley, laid down arms and surrendered to security forces during a Jirga."

News Story: Agencies Hiring Interpreters "The Nation" (11/18)

"Foreign as well as local agencies are looking for persons understanding the languages being used by terrorists, 'The Nation' has learnt reliably. According to the reports, a U.S.-based company has established a language center in Doha, Qatar, and is hiring people from across Pakistan on handsome salaries."

News Story: Pakistan Can Deal With Local, Afghan Militants: U.S. "Dawn" (11/18)

"The United States believes that Pakistan has the capability of dealing with the militants operating within its border and also with those who may come from Afghanistan. At a briefing at the U.S. State Department, spokesman Ian Kelly, however, acknowledged that the fight against the militants could not be won by military means alone." (Story also covered in all newspapers)

News Story: One Killed, Nine Injured In Quetta Motorbike Attack "Dawn" (11/18)

"At least one person was killed and nine others injured in a bomb blast outside a security official's office here on Tuesday. Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Nizam Durrani sustained injuries as a result of the attack and is believed to have been the target."

News Story: TTP Threatens To Poison Water In Pindi Area "The News" (11/18)

"Banned Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) have threatened the Rawalpindi Cantonment Board (RCB) and Chaklala Cantonment Board the (CCB) of contaminating water sources and reservoirs with poisonous material with the aim of pressurizing the Army to stop military operation in Waziristan. Official sources told 'The News' that a letter threatening to contaminate water was faxed to the Directorate of Military Lands and Cantonments (ML&C), Rawalpindi on Tuesday."

News Story: NATO Trucks Cost NHA \$83 Million Per Annum "The Nation" (11/18)

"Pakistan is suffering a loss of approximate \$83 million every year due to NATO/ISF freight truckloads that have been badly damaging the National Highway network for the last seven years, according to documents made available to 'The Nation.'"

News Story: Defence Spending To Go Up By 20pc "Dawn" (11/18)

"Pakistan's defence expenditures may exceed the budgetary allocation of Rs343 billion by about 20 per cent during the current fiscal year because of the military operation against militants. Sources told 'Dawn' that the security-related expenditures in Waziristan were much higher than during the operation in Swat."

News Story: Taliban Blow Up Girls' School Near Bara "Daily Times" (11/18)

"The Taliban on Tuesday blew up a girls' school in Khyber Agency on Tuesday, the third such attack in the Tribal Areas so far this month. The Taliban have destroyed hundreds of schools, mostly for girls, officials said."

News Story: Taliban Not Behind Attack On NATO Supplies: IG - "The Nation" (11/18)

"Inspector General (IG) Police Balochistan Syed Javed Ali Shah Bukhari has said that Taliban are not behind attacks on NATO supplies in Balochistan. He expressed these views while talking to media persons in Chaman, a bordering town with Afghanistan, the other day."

Editorial: "Do More" Once More, an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (11/18)

"The New York Times reports that U.S. National Security Adviser James Jones carried a letter on his recent visit from President Barack Obama to President Asif Ali Zardari urging Pakistan to expand its operations against the Taliban and al Qaeda.... To sweeten the pill, President Obama offers a range of new incentives such as enhanced intelligence sharing and military cooperation.... The concerns of the U.S. seem to be too narrowly focused on al Qaeda without giving due weight to the nexus between Usama bin Laden's organisation, the Afghan Taliban and now, arguably, the Pakistani Taliban along with militant groups originally nurtured for the Kashmir struggle but who have now emerged from the deserts of south Punjab to make common cause with their extremist brothers in arms. Pakistan on the other hand, is hoist between taking on al Qaeda and the Pakistani Taliban and their allies while retaining the Afghan Taliban card close to its chest for a rainy day. This disjuncture between the respective positions and concerns of both sides in the uneasy U.S.-Pakistan alliance may one day lead to divergence, unless both sides sit down and come to the conclusion that the militant threat is indivisible."

Editorial: Illogical Demand To Expand The Military Operation, an editorial in the second-largest, nationalist Urdu daily "Nawa-i-Waqt" (cir. 150,000) (11/18)

"American President Barack Obama has demanded in a letter to President Asif Ali Zardari that Pakistan should expand the military operation against extremists. The terrorism and suicide attacks in Pakistan are logical conclusion of American interference in Afghanistan and unjust occupation of a Muslim state.... Pakistan

may get a few more dollars by expanding the scope of the operation, but the ensuing destruction and chaos in Pakistan is not difficult to assess. Following the disclosure that in case of a danger American special squad could takeover Pakistan's nuclear program, the American demand for enlarging the scope of the operation is tantamount to fuel the fire of chaos, terrorism and civil war in Pakistan.... America is spending \$1 million annually on one soldier in Afghanistan and the weekly expenditure on its troops equals annual assistance of \$1.5 billion to Pakistan. Still, America expects from Pakistan to win a war which will not end for years...."

Editorial: President Obama's Letter, an editorial in the center-right Urdu daily "Pakistan" (cir. 10,000) (11/18)

"In view of the discussion that started after President Obama's letter and what James Jones had to say, it seems that only Pakistan can fight the terrorists and it should be the one that should be forced to fight them. Did Pakistan attack Afghanistan in the first place to shoulder the entire responsibility of fighting the war? James Jones opinion gives the impression that American President is not in favor of extended stay of his troops in Afghanistan and he does not want to send more troops to Afghanistan. American authorities believe that in return to \$1.5 billion annually two birds can be killed with one stone. Accepting American advice would mean that entire country is pushed into the bloody consequences.... President Obama's letter would help us understand the American designs and reconsider our role in the war against terrorism."

Editorial: Another Mischief By The U.S., an editorial note an editorial in the Lahore-based populist center-right Urdu daily "Khabrain" (cir. 50,000) (11/17)

"During his address in Shanghai, President Obama said that terrorists have fled from Afghanistan to Pakistan and are now the biggest threat to the U.S. The question is: who is to blame if terrorists flee Afghanistan? Can Obama not ask the allied troops as to why check-posts from the Pak-Afghan border were removed? Is he

not aware of the fact that despite allied forces' presence in the country, 75 percent of Afghanistan is still under Taliban control? Why do the Taliban need to flee into Pakistan when most of Afghanistan is under their control? Is it not a fact that the allied forces have failed, and are pushing the Taliban into Pakistan? Actually, President Obama is asking Pakistan to 'do more' just to absolve himself."

Editorial: U.S. Demand For 'Do More', an editorial in the Karachi-based, pro-Taliban Jihadi Urdu daily "Islam" (cir. 15,000) (11/18)

"At a time when the military operation in South Waziristan is in progress, and the terrorists are retaliating through deadly suicide attacks in Peshawar, the demand from President Obama to expand the offensive against the Taliban and Al Qaeda seems part of the U.S. plan to push Pakistan into civil war. We think that it is high time for our leadership to expose the American blackmailing and formulate the national policies in line with the aspirations of the nation."

Editorial: Will Obama's Revised Afghan Policy Guarantee Peace?, an editorial in the Lahore-based independent Urdu daily "Din" (cir. 5000) (11/18)

"According to the U.S. media, President Obama has written a letter to President Zardari asking Pakistan to step up its measures against terrorists.... The silent progress U.S. is making to ensure Indian supremacy in the region does not bode well for our national security. Hence we feel that the Pakistan government should make a wise assessment of the outcome of U.S. policies, and hold talks with American authorities keeping national interests paramount."

Editorial: Target Error?, an editorial in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (11/18)

"As Peshawar picks itself up from daily bombing attacks, the toll of civilians rises.... Where we hear anything coherent from the bombers as to why it is that they are doing what it is that they do, it is invariably along the lines of... 'We are fighting America. We want

the Americans out of Pakistan.' We would not wish to inflame the bombers into yet further atrocity, against American or other foreign interests, why is it that the terrorists seem intent on harvesting the souls of their fellow Muslims, women and children, schools and mosques? The answer lies in the dual identity of the war that is being fought - part of the Taliban's war is fought against the Americans but another and perhaps larger part of their war is fought against the state of Pakistan."

Editorial: What United States Is Up To?, an editorial in the Islamabad-based rightist English daily "Pakistan Observer" (cir. 5,000) (11/18)

"There is a general impression that U.S. demands become unending if one keeps on meeting them without any resistance.... However, emboldened by the meekish approach of the Pakistan's successive leaders, the United States is increasing pressure on the country to do things that could endanger the very existence of Pakistan.... As the U.S. President is about to announce a new so-called Af-Pak policy, it seems that the new approach too would expect too much from Pakistan without any worthwhile effort to meet its demands and needs. This is time for Pakistani strategists and leaders to deeply ponder and analyze the situation."

Editorial: Take The Nation On Board, an editorial in the Peshawar-based Urdu-language daily "Mashriq" (cir. 55,000) (11/18)

"The NWFP provincial ministers have maintained that a good number of terrorists have shifted from Waziristan to other tribal areas from where they are launching terrorist attacks in Peshawar. They demand the government to launch military operation in Orakzai Agency, Malakand, Khyber Agency and other areas. We think that the expansion of military operation in the entire FATA region would overstretch the capabilities of the Pak army which might undermine national interests of Pakistan."

Editorial: Real Threat To Pakistan's Nuclear Assets, an editorial in the popular rightist Urdu-language daily "Ausaf" (cir. 10,000) (11/18)

"The Taliban, both Afghan and Pakistani, or any Jihadi group have never uttered even a single word against the nuclear program of Pakistan. In fact, the agents of the United States, India and Israel present in Pakistan, who had staged rallies on the roads of Islamabad against our nukes, are the real threat to our nuclear assets. We urge our military leadership to beware of these anti-Pakistan elements who are siding with the armed forces on the pretext of fighting the Taliban."

Editorial: Unholy Crusade, an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (11/18)

"The Tablighi Jamaat (with millions of followers worldwide) has spoken out in very strong terms against the Taliban and their terrorist activities in the name of Islam. At the Jamaat's annual feature in Pakistan, the Tablighi Ijtema in Raiwind, scholars denounced the Taliban for their 'unholy crusade' against humanity.... The Tablighi Jamaat's message of moderate Islam will surely resound amongst the believers. By taking this position against the Taliban, the Jamaat has shown the Muslim world the true face of the Taliban. This message comes at a crucial time because in the recent past, we saw the fanatics dominating the discourse on Islam in the media and the public space."

Opinion: "Do More" Becomes Obsolete, an op-ed by Shireen M. Mazari in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (11/18)

"The U.S. keeps on chanting the 'do more' mantra before our rulers and they keep going more - even if that means destroying the nation's social fabric and stability.... Is it not time for the present leadership, then, to put a stop to the U.S. 'do more' mantra which is destroying our country?"

Opinion: Wooing The Middle Class, an op-ed by Rafia Zakaria in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (11/18)

"While reconsidering military/strategic initiatives is crucial the Obama administration must realize that much of its failure in winning Pakistani hearts and minds has been because of its failure to identify which hearts can indeed be won. A strategy that seeks to amend this omission should undertake a reconsideration of current initiatives for a narrower focus towards empowering the Pakistani middle class through the facilitation of projects that directly affect their lives. The answer to the vexing question of how Pakistanis can be wooed may thus quite simply be to know which ones to pursue."

Opinion: Washington's Welcome Indecision, an op-ed by Mahir Ali in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (11/18)

"The indecision in Washington over Afghanistan has prompted a plethora of criticism from a broad range of angles, but there is at least one redeeming factor that has received insufficient acknowledgment.... The Obama administration has faced considerable criticism for lumping Afghanistan and Pakistan together in its so-called Af-Pak strategy, but the role that links between the most deleterious elements in the two countries have played in the evolution of present conditions are undeniable.... The current debate in Washington is likely to lead to a decision that won't please anyone: a surge that doesn't mean Gen Stanley McChrystal's audacious demand, but also doesn't clearly spell out an exit strategy. It'll disappoint those who are prone to crying uncle. But a sustainable future for the region has got to be one in which Uncle Sam does not play a military role."

MISCELLANEOUS

News Story: We Can Question 'Suspicious' Journalists, Says Mazari "Daily Times" (11/18)

"We have every right to raise questions about 'suspicious' journalists and question their activities, Shireen Mazari, editor of a Lahore-based English daily, said on Tuesday. According to a private TV channel (DawnNews). She was referring to a report, published by her newspaper, which questioned the credibility of Wall Street Journal correspondent Matthew Rosenberg and accused him of being a 'spy.' Defending her newspaper's stance, Mazari said those who broke the country's laws and had frequently travelled to hostile

lands such as India in the past, were liable to scrutiny by the Pakistani media. She said Rosenberg had ventured into FATA without permission from the government, adding that she had credible information that Rosenberg had met with certain 'undesirable' individuals."

News Story: Home-Built JF-17 to Be Unveiled On 23rd "Dawn" (11/18)

"The first multi-role JF-17 Thunder jet fighter, jointly developed with China, produced at the Aircraft Manufacturing Factory (AMF) of the Pakistan Aeronautical Complex will roll out in Kamra, Attock on Nov 23. This would be a milestone, marking the fulfillment of Pakistan Air Force's goals of achieving self-sufficiency and strengthening its fighting capability, ISPR said on Tuesday."

News Story: Musharraf Passed Atomic Information To U.S. "The News" (11/18)

"Nuclear scientist Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan has expressed his firm conviction that former military ruler Pervez Musharraf had transferred very sensitive information relating to Pakistan's atomic program to the U.S. Dr. Khan said he was ready to record the facts before the court of law."

POLITICAL ISSUES

News Story: Jamaat-e-Islami Anti-U.S. Rally Today "The Nation" (11/18)

"Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) (women) Islamabad will organize a 'Go America Go' rally today (Wednesday) against the unnoticed interference of the U.S. in the internal affairs of Pakistan. Addressing a press conference in Islamabad on Tuesday, Syed Bilal, JI Islamabad Amir,

alleged that U.S. firm Blackwater was providing assistance to notorious spy agencies of India and Israel in Balochistan and FATA region."

(All circulation figures are based on estimation)
Patterson